

TAILORED PDF PORTFOLIO GUIDE

Tools and Tips for Curating Your Work

MARYLAND
INSTITUTE
COLLEGE
OF ART

JOSEPH MEYERHOFF CENTER FOR

**CAREER
DEVELOPMENT**



TYPES OF PORTFOLIOS

1. Online General portfolio:

A website that shares your capabilities. An online portfolio is usually used for the **general audience** rather than someone specific.

2. Tailored PDF Portfolio:

A document, usually a PDF, that is curated for a **specific audience** with more process work and more details.

A TAILORED PDF PORTFOLIO?

1. In Person:

Job or Internship Interviews
Career Fair
Portfolio Reviews
Informational Interviews
Networking

2. Online / Email:

Job or Internship Applications
Residency Applications
Graduate School Applications
Competition or Award Submissions
Networking

WHY DO WE NEED A TAILORED PDF PORTFOLIO?

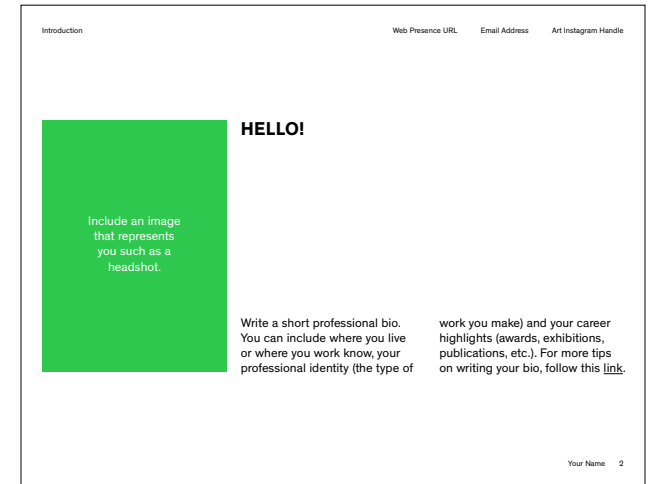
1. It gives you the opportunity to **curate** towards your audience and to include the **most relevant** and strongest work .
2. It could show more **process** and **research** that is not included in your website.
3. It shows that you have gone the **extra mile!**
4. It also gives you **access offline** and is portable for multiple interview situations and scenarios.

ANATOMY OF A PORTFOLIO

1. Your **first page** should always begin with your name and contact info. You can add an optional **second page** and include an introduction, a bio, or an artist statement.

2. **All pages** should have your name and contact info as a default setting in the footer.

3. Your PDF should have 10 to 20 pages. **Quality over quantity.** It is less about how many projects you include, more about the content.



Click [here](#) to see the full example tailored PDF portfolio.

ANATOMY OF A PORTFOLIO

4. For each project or piece, you should **include the following information:**

Name or Title

For fine artwork include dates and dimensions.

Category

For example, Branding, Installation, etc.

Tools Used

Medium, software, process, etc.

Prompt or Concept

State if there was a creative prompt or challenge if there was one. If the work was self-initiated, be sure to reflect this as well.

TITLE OF PIECE Category or Medium / Media
Include a representative image of your final product to demonstrate the artwork.
Consider making a title page for each project as an introduction. Include a photograph that shows your piece. Your Name 3

Title of Piece	Web Presence URL	Email Address	Art Instagram Handle
CONCEPT OVERVIEW	Include a photograph that demonstrates your concept or the prompt of your piece. For tips on documenting your 2D work and 3D work , follow the links.		
Give an overview of you project. State if there was a creative prompt or challenge if there was one. If the work was self-initiated, be sure to reflect this as well.			
	Your Name 4		

Click [here](#) to see the full example tailored PDF portfolio.

ANATOMY OF A PORTFOLIO

Description and Caption

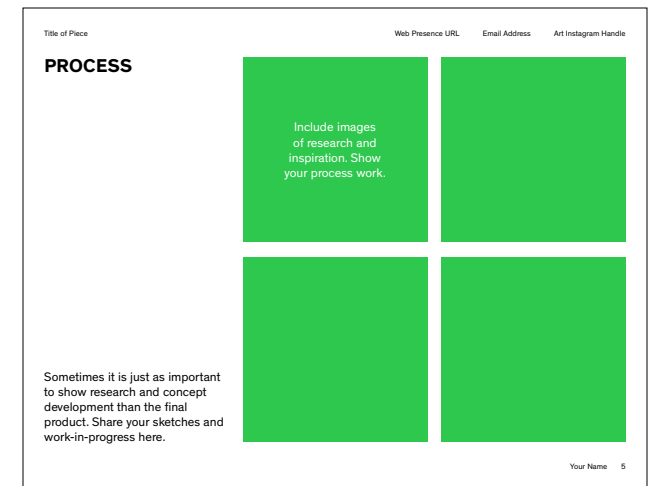
A brief explanation for each piece.

Process Work

Sometime it is just as important to show research and concept development than the final product.

Outcome

Documentation and mock ups of your work.



Click [here](#) to see the full example tailored PDF portfolio.

ANATOMY OF A PORTFOLIO

5. Order your work by **starting with the strongest** and most relevant piece to the place you are applying to. Consider transitions from one project to another.

6. Your **last page** should include a “Thank you” with your contact info.



Click [here](#) to see the full example tailored PDF portfolio.

GETTING STARTED

1. Before creating your PDF, **organize your files and content**, and proofread your copy. Figure out the structure before developing your portfolio.
2. Your PDF does not have to be made in Adobe InDesign! You should **use a software that you feel comfortable with** such as Google Slides, Keynote, or Microsoft PowerPoint. Just make sure to export your portfolio as a PDF.
3. **Create a default template.** Make sure to include your contact info on every page.
4. **Duplicate the same template** so your format is consistent throughout your portfolio.
5. **Export as a PDF file.** Reduce file size when exporting so your file is not too big for emails. You can do this by changing your export settings in your program (Illustrator, InDesign, Acrobat) or use an external source such as PDF compressor websites.

TIPS

1. **Do not over design** your portfolio. Remember that your portfolio is there to support your work, not to compete with it.
2. **Describe the concept** of your piece rather than the form of it. Share information that your audience cannot see in your work such as the story or idea behind it.
3. **Document everything!** Behind the scenes and process work matters.
4. **Curate** projects to the specific audience.
5. Read requirements of application and **stick to all guidelines**—Size of document, number of pieces or pages, etc.
6. **Check for typos!** Grammar and spelling count!

NEED MORE HELP?

Here's a [link](#) to a sample tailored PDF portfolio!